

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 067181
ORIGIN SS-25

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S:MR. TWADDELL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T STATE 067181

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, IR, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN-U.S. RELATIONS

REF: TEHRAN 2491

1. WE ARE NOT CLEAR WHY ASAD MAY HAVE THOUGHT IT USEFUL TO ASK THE SHAH FOR THE LATTER'S HELP IN BRINGING SYRIA AND THE U.S. TOGETHER. WE SHARE THAT OBJECTIVE AND, AS A MATTER OF FACT, ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE PROGRESS TO THAT END THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS.

2. YOU SHOULD TELL KHALATBARY THAT HIS COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY NOTED IN WASHINGTON. YOU COULD ASSURE HIM THAT WE, TOO, WISH TO SEE SYRIA AND THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 067181

U.S. WORKING EVEN MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER. WE, TOO, SEE ASAD AS A SERIOUS MAN WITH AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE CURRENT EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP WHICH ASAD HAS BROUGHT TO THE SARG, NOT ONLY WITH REGARD TO THE PROBLEMS THAT IT CONFRONTS IN PEACEMAKING BUT ALSO, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH RESPECT TO THE LEBANESE CRISIS OF THE PAST

YEAR--DURING WHICH THE USG COMMENTED PUBLICLY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS ON THE MODERATE AND STABILIZING ROLE WHICH SYRIA WAS PLAYING. YOU SHOULD TELL KHALATBARY THAT THE SECRETARY WAS VERY FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY ASAD DURING THEIR MEETING IN DAMASCUS LAST MONTH, AND THAT THE PRESIDENT (AND THE SECRETARY) LOOK FORWARD TO THE MEETING WITH ASAD WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN EUROPE IN MAY. YOU SHOULD NOTE THAT THE SECRETARY HAS INVITED FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM FOR DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON IN APRIL, WHICH WILL SERVE TO KEEP OUR DIALOGUE ACTIVE AT A HIGH LEVEL IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MEETINGS OF THE TWO CHIEFS OF STATE; WE EXPECT THAT KHADDAM'S VISIT HERE WILL INCLUDE A MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT. MEANWHILE, OUR AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS HAS RATHER GOOD ACCESS TO THE SYRIAN LEADERSHIP ON A CONTINUING BASIS. YOU SHOULD TELL KHALATBARY THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SUGGEST THAT HE MAY WISH TO INFORM THE SHAH ALONG THESE LINES AND TO ASSURE HIS MAJESTY THAT IT IS INDEED OUR INTENTION TO KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SYRIA OPEN AND ACTIVE. WE APPRECIATE THE SHAH'S BRINGING THIS MATTER TO OUR ATTENTION.

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